

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE MIDDLE DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
VALDOSTA DIVISION**

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

v.

**BERTHA SANTIAGO-MARRERO, and
JADIEL JOEL CARTAGENA-SOTO,**

Defendants.

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CASE NO: 7:22-CR-60 WLS

ORDER

Before the Court is the Unopposed Joint Motion for Continuance in the Interest of Justice (Doc. 44) (“Motion”). Therein, Defense Counsel for Bertha Santiago-Marrero and Jadel Joel Cartagena-Soto and Government’s Counsel request a continuance of the trial of this matter from the May 2023 trial term to the next term of Court. Counsel state discovery has been received and investigation by the defense is ongoing. Investigation involves out-of-state investigation in Florida, and additional time is needed to complete that investigation. Additionally, due to the language barrier between counsel and Defendant Cartageno-Soto, it has been necessary to use an interpreter to communicate. Defense Counsel states scheduling that communication has been difficult and time consuming, preventing counsel from being able to make the arrangements necessary for any resolution. Counsel states that the ends of justice served by granting the above circumstances outweigh the best interest of the public and Defendants in a speedy trial and that such period is excludable under the Speedy Trial Act 18 U.S.C. § 3161.

Based on the Defendants’ and Government’s stated reasons, the Court finds that the ends of justice served by granting such a continuance outweigh the best interests of the public and the Defendants in a speedy trial. 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(A)-(B). Therefore, the Motion (Doc. 44) is **GRANTED**.

The Court hereby **ORDERS** that the trial in the above-referenced matter be **CONTINUED** to the Valdosta Division August 2023 trial term and its conclusion, or as may otherwise be ordered by the Court. Furthermore, it is **ORDERED** that the time lost under the Speedy Trial Act, 18 U.S.C. § 3161, be **EXCLUDED** pursuant to 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7) because the Court has continued the trial in this case and finds that the failure to grant a continuance (a) would likely result in a miscarriage of justice, and (b) would deny Defense Counsel the reasonable time necessary for effective preparation, taking into account the exercise of due diligence. See 18 U.S.C. § 3161(h)(7)(B)(i), (iv).

SO ORDERED, this 21st day of March 2023.

/s/ W. Louis Sands

W. LOUIS SANDS, SR. JUDGE
UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT